

HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT[441]

Notice of Intended Action

Twenty-five interested persons, a governmental subdivision, an agency or association of 25 or more persons may demand an oral presentation hereon as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.4(1)“b.”

Notice is also given to the public that the Administrative Rules Review Committee may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this proposed action under section 17A.8(6) at a regular or special meeting where the public or interested persons may be heard.

Pursuant to the authority of Iowa Code section 249A.4, the Department of Human Services proposes to amend Chapter 78, “Amount, Duration and Scope of Medical and Remedial Services,” Iowa Administrative Code.

This amendment is related to a 2015 mandate by the General Assembly that administrative rules be adopted to provide for coverage of telehealth under the Medicaid program. The administrative rule must provide that an in-person contact between a health care professional and a patient is not required as a prerequisite for payment for services appropriately provided through telehealth in accordance with generally accepted health care practices and standards prevailing in the applicable professional community at the time the services are provided. The mandate also directs that health care services provided through in-person consultations or through telehealth shall be treated as equivalent services for the purposes of reimbursement.

This amendment will formalize a long-standing (non-rule-based) coverage standard that payment may be made for services rendered via telehealth to the same extent as such services are covered under Medicaid when they are rendered in person and where provision of such services via telehealth are considered appropriate by the current standards in the medical community.

Any interested person may make written comments on the proposed amendment on or before August 25, 2015. Comments should be directed to Harry Rossander, Bureau of Policy Coordination, Department of Human Services, Hoover State Office Building, Fifth Floor, 1305 East Walnut Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0114. Comments may be sent by fax to (515)281-4980 or by e-mail to policyanalysis@dhs.state.ia.us.

This amendment does not provide for waivers in specified situations because requests for the waiver of any rule may be submitted under the Department’s general rule on exceptions at 441—1.8(17A,217).

After analysis and review of this rule making, no impact on jobs has been found.

This amendment is intended to implement Iowa Code section 249A.4.

The following amendment is proposed.

Adopt the following **new** rule 441—78.55(249A):

441—78.55(249A) Services rendered via telehealth. An in-person contact between a health care professional and a patient is not required as a prerequisite for payment for otherwise-covered services appropriately provided through telehealth in accordance with generally accepted health care practices and standards prevailing in the applicable professional community at the time the services are provided. Health care services provided through in-person consultations or through telehealth shall be treated as equivalent services for the purposes of reimbursement.